

SPOTLIGHTING MARINES

WHAT THEY DO



JOB: MOS MONITOR



THE MARINES WHO MONITOR EACH OCCUPATIONAL field have a tough job and they do their bests to do it fairly and in accordance with the needs of the Marine Corps. **Master Sgt. Jon Z. Ali**, the monitor for Military Occupational Specialty 5800, Military Police and Corrections, talks about his job and what it takes to do it.

Typical Day: The typical day for the 41-year-old Hyde Park, N.Y., native involves about 30-40 e-mails, about the same number of phone calls, and a boatload of paperwork. "I spend most of my day on the phone and with my nose in the computer," says Ali. Many of the queries he receives can be answered by local chains of command and the monitors encourage that. Many Marines, staff noncommissioned officers included, believe the monitors have the final say and can just send them wherever they ask to go. The truth is the monitors don't have the final say – Marines can only be moved if there is a vacancy where they want to go and there is someone to fill their spot when they leave. The "needs of the Marine Corps" dictate the monitors' decisions.

Worst Day: "Having to tell someone they have to go somewhere they don't want to go, especially someone you've known for 15 or so years."

▲ Despite what many think, assigning Marines to billets throughout the world is not as easy as throwing darts to determine who goes where. It's done with strategy, forethought and a little luck at predicting the future.

Photo by Gunnery Sgt. Glenn Holloway

Best Day: "Making someone happy. We ride a roller coaster up here. One minute you're on the phone telling someone they can't go where they want to go, then a minute later someone calls for some other place and you get to tell him 'yes.'"

Biggest Myth: Time on station requirements for permanent change of station moves. According to Marine Corps Order P1300.8R, "The Bible" of monitors, "The minimum TOS requirement for all assignments within the (Continental United States) shall be 36 months."

Craziest Request: "A re-enlistment request from a Marine with five non-judicial punishments."

Most Requested Stations: Hawaii, Albany, Ga., and Quantico/Washington.

Hardest Sale: Barstow and Twentynine Palms, Calif.

Job Rating: On a 1-10 scale, a 9+. "I'm still loving it," Ali says.

Saved Round: "You can't always have 'your way,' Ali says. "Sometimes you have to give a little. Remember, to think career path – What's (your move) going to do for your career path and your promotions." **M**

JOB: CBIRF MARINE



AT THE REQUEST OF LOCAL, STATE, OR FEDERAL agencies Chemical and Biological Incident Response Force responds or deploys to credible threats of chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or high yield explosive incidents. Four-year veteran of the unit **Sgt. Troy Anstine**, a nuclear, biological, chemical defense specialist, MOS 5711, talks about the job and why he loves doing it.

Job/Position with the Unit: Anstine is assigned to the Zone Integrity Platoon and holds the billet of squad leader and team leader for the Initial Response Force. He is also the resident expert, chief trainer and noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the Standoff Chemical Agent Detector.

Age: "I celebrated a memorable 34th birthday (Feb. 3) the day CBIRF was cleared to extract the mail from the (Dirksen Senate Office Building) where the original letter containing the ricin was discovered."

The Reason You Became a CBIRF Marine: "Everyone said that's where you could find the best NBC action. I never realized how true it was."

Typical Day: "There's nothing typical about CBIRF. Of course we PT, stand in formations, and conduct inspections but the rest of the time is spent in specialized training and dedicating yourself to your particular job. We train a lot, we learn a lot and then we train some more. CBIRF is a very fast tempo unit, and one thing's for sure, it's definitely not a 9-to-5 job. We're on call, with pagers by our side, ready to respond 24/7."

Most Memorable Job: "They've all had their place of importance and each was a stepping-stone for the next job to come. Definitely being part of the SCAD team has been a highlight and a very rewarding time since I've been at CBIRF. But, the recent events (in Washington) and the opportunity to use the training I've received ... and go down range in a real life domestic NBC situation, will always sit at the top of my list of jobs I've done."

Pucker Factor on 1-10 Scale: "It depends on the situation and type of contamination. It also depends upon the amount and type of training, experience, knowledge and confidence in the equipment. I'd give the ricin incident a rating of 4. If the situation entailed mass casualties or maybe an unknown agent, then there certainly would be a 'pucker factor' debate."

Type of Training Required Before Walking into a Biologically Contaminated Area: "NBC training is a good start, but not everyone at CBIRF is a NBC defense specialist. There's a mixture of MOSs that normally would receive NBC training once a year." CBIRF has a school at a specialized training facility where instructors train Marines to respond to chemical or biological incidents prior to Marines participating in any life-threatening situations. CBIRF not only trains Marines, but also local, state and gov-

ernment agencies, such as the FBI, fire departments, U.S. Marshals, other armed forces, both domestic and foreign.

Equipment Used: "We used a Tyvek Pro-Tech 'F' level B suit (which protects against type Type 3 – Liquid, Type 4 – Spray, Type 5 – Particles, Type 6 – Splash) hazards, Latex gloves, Bata-Max over boots, a Powered Air Purifying Respirator (PAPR) with FR-57 filters and 'Chem' tape to seal areas around the mask, wrists and tops of the over boots. **M**

> While many Marines dread the annual gas chamber trip necessary to meet their Nuclear, Biological and Chemical training requirements, there's a small group of Marines at Indian Head, Md., who love their NBC training and have taken it to a different level. Those Marines are with the Chemical and Biological Incident Response Force and their job is to stay ready for the nation's call.

Photo by Gunnery Sgt. Glenn Holloway



JOB: COMBAT ILLUSTRATOR

IN GARRISON AND IN BATTLE, COMBAT ILLUSTRATORS are expected to document the historical and technical aspects of the Corps though painting, sculpting, sketching and a variety of other creative means. **Sgt. Jack Carrillo**, one of the two active duty 4611 combat illustrators in the Marine Corps, talks about his job and being creative on demand.

Typical Day: A typical day for 32-year old Carrillo, who works in the Graphics Department of the Combat Visual Information Center, Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, involves providing visual information support, usually about recruit training, to the depot and to the Western Recruiting Region. His day revolves around visual media—photography, videography, graphic arts, printing and reproduction, classroom equipment support and maintenance, audiovisual equipment issue and training devices. “Generally, I do a lot of computer generated work. Occasionally I will have the opportunity to paint, however our customer base, recruits and drill instructors, is very information driven,” Carrillo said.

This routine is a marked contrast from his deployment in 2003 when he was augmented by History and Museums to go Iraq as a combat artist for Operation Iraqi Freedom. “During combat ops when the day would start and end was never consistent,” said the San Diego native who has been in

▼ **The word Marine evokes images of grunts, with rifles and machine guns at the ready. A camouflage-clad artist, with pen at the ready, busily sketching those grunts as they prepare to enter combat is the last scene that comes to mind, yet it’s the Corps’ combat illustrators who capture those blood-stirring images of Marines.**

Photo by Lance Cpl. Jess Levens

the Corps eight years. “There was never any set time to draw, day or night, I did it whenever possible. I left combat ops with 5 sketchbooks — 150 sketches.”

Path to Becoming a Combat Artist: “I have drawn all my life. I was a corpsman in the Navy, and my little brother who was joining the Marines at the time told me about the combat illustrator program. I submitted a portfolio and was accepted. If you asked me 10 years ago, I would never have believed it. Superficially it would appear that the at times austere military climate we live in is anything but good for art. Today I think the exact opposite.”

Worst Day: “The worst day I had as a combat artist was when my supplies were ruined in an Iraqi swamp by Al Basarah. Our trail vehicle carrying our supplies flipped in a rapid moving convoy at night. With the exception of the sketchbook I had and a small cache of art supplies, the rest of my gear was lost or water damaged.”

Best Day: “My best day was after we had been in Baghdad a few days and realizing that I had made it all the way there with a tank battalion creating combat art all along the way, realizing that I belonged to a proud tradition of Marine artists.”

Biggest Myth: “The greatest myth about the MOS would maybe be of our existence. A lot of people don’t know that this opportunity to create via art exists in the Marine Corps.”

Dealing with the Artistic Version of Writer’s Block: I can’t ever remember getting a block. Sometimes if I get bogged down in a piece I’ll step away for a while and come back to it again.

Job Rating: “Most definitely a 10!”

Saved Round: Though, “I am one of two active duty combat (illustrators), there are many retired combat artists that still contribute to the program. **M**

JOB: ADMIN MARINE

ADMIN MARINES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTAINING and updating the service record books for hundreds and sometimes thousands of Marines. All to often, it is an endless and thankless job. **Cpl. Star Sapulpa**, a personnel clerk at Headquarters Battalion, Henderson Hall, in Arlington, Va., talks about her job and the fact that there’s more to it than most Marines think.

Job and Unit: The 24-year-old native of Yankton, S.D., works at Marine Corps National Capital Region Command, Henderson Hall, in Arlington, Va. “I have an (military occupational specialty) of 0121, which is a personnel clerk. In the Consolidated Administration office I work as a pay clerk. I ensure all the Marines in the battalion are getting paid and are getting the correct amount. Pay also includes any special payment such as jump pay, demolition duty pay, hostile fire pay, combat zone tax exclusion and some other pay entitlements,” said Sapulpa, who has been in the Marine Corps for three years.

Admin Marine Duties: “We take care of Marines. I know it sounds simple but (we deal with) anything that has to do with anything.”

Typical Day: “There are two pay clerks here in (Consolidated Administration) and over 2,000 Marines in this battalion, so I receive a lot of calls from Marines and since the war has started it is even more hectic with all the extra pay that the Marines are entitled to for being overseas. I am also partly responsible for the Diary Feedback Report, which is a job in itself. I stay pretty busy throughout the day.” The fact that Henderson Hall Consolidated Administration is responsible for more than 2000 Marines and their SRBs can amount to a lot of paperwork and a lot of requests. “Last month we took care of 356 Marines—this does not include those who call in or just stop by to drop paper work off.”

Worst Day: “I can’t really say that I have ever really had a horrible day.”

Best Day: “Any day that someone will actually say ‘Gee thanks, I got paid.’ It doesn’t happen to often, but I have heard it a couple of times”

Biggest Myth: “You do not get paid on the 1st and the 15th. The first payday of the month is the 15th and the second would be the 30th.”

Saved Round: It can be frustrating to hear Marines complain about the service in a Consolidated Administration office, especially when those



▲ **Contrary to popular opinion**, the Marines of a Consolidated Administration center do not sit around reading magazines all day. They deal with myriad issues of vital concern to Marines such as basic pay, promotions, dependants, housing allowances, powers of attorney, next of kin emergency notification, and many more.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Cindy Fisher

working in the office know they are doing the best job they can, solving problems for others. “Most of the time (the problem is) the Marine’s fault—either they failed to do their re-enlistment on time or they spent money they knew they did not rate,” Sapulpa said. Even though the job can be frustrating and the thanks are few and far between, Sapulpa and her fellow Admin Marines continue to do their best every day to ensure the administrative needs of their fellow Marines are met. **M**





JOB: COMPANY GUNNY



IT TAKES A LOT MORE THAN WRINKLES AND THE ability to drink a bitter, thicker-than-mud cup of coffee to be a good company gunnery sergeant. The job requires adaptability and a gung-ho attitude for this is the Marine who performs the magic that gets things done in the company.

While he may not be a “gunny,” 28-year-old **Staff Sgt. Robert C. Kirby** wears the company gunny hat for Charlie Company, 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Marine Division, at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. He talks about what its like to be the coffee-swiveling, butt-chewing company gunny.

Company Gunny Duties: Company gunnies coordinate the logistical support for a unit, the “whole beans, bullets, and band aids.” The task is not as easy as it sounds says the Pittsburg, Calif., native who has been in the Corps for almost 10 years. “You would not believe all the channels you have to go through now a days to get that stuff locked on. Sending in logistical support requests to a dozen people just to make sure the right person gets it.” The company gunny deals with the daily running of the company, “to include problems with the barracks, ranges, training areas, transportation and embarkation. All those things have to be constantly double and triple checked via e-mail or the phone to make sure they’re good to go.” And Kirby

< **Most Marines have seen** some older-than-dirt, gravel-voiced, sharply pressed, barrel-chested, stern-faced company gunny with coffee mug in hand barking at some unfortunate junior Marines for a minor infraction. They see the company gunny and know he is essential to the inner-workings of the company, but they are not sure exactly what it is he does.

Photo by Cpl. Matthew S. Richards

doesn’t even like talking on the phone. He also tracks accountability for company gear, keeps the commanding officer in the information loop about it and helps develop junior Marines and new staff sergeants, says Kirby, whose MOS is 0369 infantry platoon sergeant. Of the butt-chewing aspect of the job, he adds, “Although I do chew out Marines, it’s all for their benefit.”

Company Gunny Training: “I would definitely recommend having good computer skills, people skills, and have been there and done that. Most of the stuff you need to know is learned over the years just dealing with certain aspects of the Corps.”

Myths: “I think a lot of Marines are under the misconception that all company gunnies do is sit around and drink coffee all day, think about how to piss the Marines off and are in charge of the beans, bullets, band-aids and ass-chewings. That’s not all true. I don’t even like coffee.”

Stereotypes: “Some stereotypes are that company gunnies are old and crusty—I’m only 28—blouse their boots below their ankles, drink lots of coffee, eat their young at birth and who knows?”

Job Rating: On a 1-10 scale, a 10. “Of course I rate my job as a 10. I miss being in the trenches but I am happy supporting the company.”

Saved Rounds: “I’d have to say that the coolest thing is that I have finally become a part of “THEY”, you know the ones that make all the decisions. I am now a part of the decision-making process.” **M**

JOB: FMF CORPSMAN



SOMETIMES CALLED DEVIL DOCS, GREENSIDE corpsmen, a term used to identify corpsmen attached to Marine units, are an essential part of the Marine Corps team. **Seaman Luis Ramirez**, a Fleet Marine Force corpsman assigned to Headquarters and Service Company, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, talks about his job and what its like to be a corpsman deployed with Marines.

Training: To become a corpsman, Ramirez, a native of Chicago, attended the 14 weeklong Basic Hospital Corps School in Great Lakes, Ill., where he learned basic patient care and how to treat life-threatening emergencies. Then, to become a Fleet Marine Force corpsman, the 23-year-old, who has been in the Navy two years and assigned with Marine units for three fourths of that time, had to attend the nine weeklong Field Medical Service School at Camp Johnson on Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., to learn basic combat medicine. But the he felt it all worth it for the “chance to be a combat medic,” Ramirez said.

Typical Day: His job is very different from that of hospital corpsmen, Ramirez says. “Working at a hospital, you just see patients. When you work with the Marines, you care more about them. They’re not only your friends, but you depend on them to protect you and carry out the mission. These are people you want to bring home to their families. (1st Bn., 2nd Marine Regiment) sick call (goes) in the morning. (We) take care of Marines that are injured or sick. All day it is deployment readiness—immunizations, audiograms. We’re seeing who’s ready to deploy, and who’s not.”

Deployment History: “I had been a corpsman for six months when I was deployed on the USS Gunston Hall. First we went to Camp Shoupe, Kuwait, then Iraq—An Nasiriyah, Al Kut, Ad Dwinah, Al Reefah. I’d love to deploy to another combat zone!”

Worst Day: “March 23, 2003, we were under heavy gunfire in An Nasiriyah, (Iraq) and we had to run through the city on foot to find an exit for our Assault Amphibian Vehicles and M1A1 tanks. If they would’ve kept going, they would’ve gotten stuck in the mud.”

Best Day: “Coming out of battle in Iraq with all of my Marines from 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines, Bravo Company, Weapons Platoon—not one injury!”

Craziest Day: “We were running through Iraq and (an Iraqi) was waving at us. We thought it was just a normal civilian, but then (the individual pulled out an AK-47 and tried to shoot us.”

Weirdest Injury: “I had to treat an Iraqi lady who was shot in the butt. We were under fire, though, so I just had time to apply a pressure dressing.”

Characteristics of a Good Greenside Corpsman: “Gotta’ be motivated and squared away. Ready for anything.”

Biggest Myth: “That we ‘skate’ in the rear. We always have one job or another to do to get Marines ready to deploy.”

Job Rating: On a 1-10 scale, a 10. “We are the pride of the Navy!” **M**

▼ **They do so much more** than just give shots and pass out Motrin. In garrison, they make sure Marines stay healthy and in combat, they risk their lives to save Marines. When the cry is sounded, “Corpsmen up!” they respond.

Photo by Lance Cpl. Sarah A. Beavers



JOB: CHIEF OF STAFF



TRYING TO DEFINE THE JOB CHIEF OF STAFF can be difficult—duties range somewhere between master coordinator and commander of all unforeseen events. In reality Chiefs of Staff provide the planning and operational coordination that enables the Marine Corps to project forces around the globe to where they need to be. When the Marine Corps is called for action, the chief of staff is the one answering the phone. **Col. Michael C. O’Neal**, the chief of staff for U.S. Marine Forces Pacific, talks about his job.

Responsibilities: “I have a multitude of functions that I do for the commanding general. One of the major tasks is to coordinate all the MARFORPAC staff functions here in Hawaii. Secondly, I interface daily with my counterpart chiefs of staff at both (I Marine Expeditionary Force), III MEF and bases Pacific for routine coordination that we have to do to allow them to accomplish their missions. Third, because we are the service component for U.S. Pacific Command, I also coordinate with the other service headquarters here and with PACOM as required.”

Career Impact: “With my career now mostly behind me, there is no sole target of whom I would want to most impact. I hope that I am having a day-to-day influence on Marines who serve in the headquarters.”

Biggest Accomplishment as a Chief of Staff: “To answer that honestly, it’s not really my biggest accomplishment, but the staff’s accomplishment. I’ve just been a part of the whole thing. And that accomplishment is clearly the deployment support that we’ve worked hard to allow I MEF to move back into Kuwait. As we speak, vehicle convoys are on the move back into Iraq. That has required a lot of coordination and resource management here at the component level to insure that IMEF would have what it needed to go take on this challenge and accomplish this mission.”

Worst Day: “The day I retire. It will be difficult to hang the uniform up and walk away—that day will probably be classed as my worst day.”

Best Day: “I have had a lot of days at work—28 years of them more or less. ... I think if I had to rank a number one day of work, it would be on day three during execution of the ground war to liberate Kuwait. My battalion was sitting on the outskirts of Kuwait City. We had just over come a night engagement and won. We were sitting in the objective that we were assigned. While we had sustained five wounded, nobody was killed. We had consolidated, and were ready to accomplish the next mission. We knew we had been in a tough fight and accomplished the mission. The best thing was, that we were intact as an organization—ready to continue. There was a tremendous sense of accomplishment and pride, because we had been through combat on and off for three straight days.”

Job Rating: On a 1-10 scale, a 8. “The most fun and rewarding assignment that I have had, which was a 10, was as a tank battalion commander as a lieutenant colonel. Right behind that was the chance to command III MEF Headquarters Group at number nine. That puts me at number eight here at Hawaii. It is still high up on the scale. There is a lot of joy in this job as well, especially in what I see going on here day to day.” **M**

▼ **The chief of staff billet’s origin** is steeped in centuries old military tradition. As was true hundreds of years ago, today’s chief of staff is a position of authority, serving as the right hand to the commander.

Photo by Lance Cpl. Jared M. Plotts



JOB: MARINE GUNNER



A BACKGROUND IN THE INFANTRY PROVIDES the necessary base of experience to build up the vast combat arms knowledge required of gunners. These weapon’s experts advice commanders and develop, coordinate and monitor training for the tactical employment of infantry weapons. They expect continuous assignments to the Fleet Marine Force and spend a large amount of their time deployed, all to keep their skills fresh and maintain a high degree of proficiency. **Chief Warrant Officer 2 Terrence D. Washington**, a battalion gunner with Battalion Landing Team 1/2, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, talks about being a gunner and why they are the best at what they do.

Typical Day: The infantry trains to prepare for combat and there in nothing typical about combat, says the 39-year-old Rochester, N.Y., native. “Typical insinuates I could become bored with the job—I assure you this job leaves no room for boredom. I am the technical and tactical advisor to the (commanding officer). I help with designing the battalions training goals, I ensure all our Marines are trained and qualified with their weapons and while deployed I design and develop range facilities to maintain our BLTs skills,” said the 21-year veteran of the Corps.

Selection for Gunner: “I had Gunner mentors who made me want to be like them. To apply for the program you have to have extensive infantry experience, have 16-23 years active service, be an E-7 to E-9 and the commitment to stay an infantryman and improve upon the profession.”

Gunner Training: Even beyond the knowledge learned as senior SNCOs in their MOS, gunners garner a wealth of additional knowledge at several schools. “Today’s gunner will attend (The Basic School) and the Warrant Officer Basic Course for three months. Then he will attend a level II range officers course for a week, followed by a specially designed two-and-a-half-week small arms course given at SAWIC in Quantico, (Va.). He will then undergo a five-week advance crew-served weapons course here at (Marine Corps Base Camp) Lejeune, (N.C.), and 3 weeks at EWTGLANT learning the fire support piece. After all of this he will go out to Twentynine Palms, (Calif.), and put it all to practice with the Infantry Officers Course.”

Best Day: “Every day I see a Marine get it! What I mean is when the skill set the Marines are working on start sinking in, start becoming second nature, I know we all have a better chance of getting home.”

Biggest Myth: “There are no myths, everything you have heard is true!”

Gunner Stereotypes: “That would obviously depend upon who you ask. I like to think we are the best of the world’s best fighting force.”

On Non-Gunners Being Called Gunner: “We as a Marine



▲ **The bursting bomb** worn by Marine Gunners, MOS 0306, denotes expertise in combat arms skills. Considered the voice of wisdom on all aspects of infantry weapons, gunners come from the infantry’s senior staff noncommissioned officer ranks of the MOS 0369.

Photo by Lance Cpl Sarah. A. Beavers

Corps take pride in our history, customs and courtesies. It bothers me to see so-called professional officers and enlisted who do not understand the history that comes with the special designation as a Marine Gunner. If the CWO is wearing a bomb on his left collar he does so because he was directed to by the Commandant in writing. This designation certificate is in addition to our commissioning certificate. If you think being defensive about our title is being somewhat petty address any Marine (staff sergeant, gunnery sergeant, sergeant major) by the title of sergeant as they do in the Army and see what response you receive.”

Coollest Thing About Being a Gunner: “Training with weapons and my Marines and wearing the bursting bomb!”

Job Rating: On a 1-10 scale, a 9. “Nothing is a 10” **M**



JOB: PENTAGON TOUR GUIDE

IF LOST IN THE MILES AND MILES OF PENTAGON corridors, just ask **Sgt. Anthony Martin**, deputy director of Pentagon Tours, for directions.

As a tour guide, he navigates the hallways of the Pentagon forward and backward with ease. He talks about his job and some of the highlights of sharing the Pentagon's history with the public.

Getting the Job: Becoming a Pentagon tour guide is not as easy as simply walking into the job. The 27-year-old Sequim, Wash., native had a lot of memorization to do first. Potential tour guides are sent from their commands for a six-month to one-year tour of duty. "They then enter the Tour Guide Training Program, which consists of all Pentagon Tours security measures, tour operations, and memorizing a 28 page script in a period of 10 days. They also have to learn how to navigate our one and a half mile route through a maze of corridors while walking backwards," said Martin, whose MOS is 4066 small computer systems specialist.

Daily Tours: "During the slow months each tour guide may have only one a day, but during the busy months, each of our 33 tour guides will probably give 3-4 tours each day. We have a very high demand and often we're only limited by our manning."

Favorite Tour Spot: "One spot I always spend a few moments in is the Hall of Heroes. When I have free time I go in there and look at the names of those who have given the ultimate sacrifice. Our Core Values are embodied in all of those people."

▲ With 17 and a half miles of corridors, 131 stairways and 19 escalators honeycombed throughout a building occupying 3,705,793 square feet, who could blame a Marine for being lost in the Pentagon.

Photo by Cpl. Clinton F. Firstbrook

First Question Asked by Tourists: "Were you here on 9/11?"

Craziest Questions: "Have you ever killed anyone?" "Is there an alien body in the basement?" "If D.C. is overrun, is there a thermo-nuclear devise that will blow up the Pentagon?" Those are just a few that come to mind right away."

Famous People: "I've met the President, Sean Austin, R. Lee Ermy, Miss USA, Miss Virginia, Linda Carter, the Washington Redskins, Chicago Bulls, Detroit Redwings, and of course, all of the senior staff for each of the services. But my crown-ing achievement was giving Robert Deniro a tour of the Pentagon. I have a signed picture that we took after the tour."

Job Importance: "For some of our visitors, the Pentagon Tour Guides are the only military members that they will come into contact with, probably for their whole lives. For them, we not only represent our service, nor the Department of Defense, but freedom, independence and all those things that our nation has fought for since its inception. Sometimes, that's a lot of weight to carry."

Lessons Learned at the Pentagon: "I've probably learned more about our nation's history here than I did in all four years of high school!" **M**

JOB: MSG MARINE

MARINES ON MSG DUTY TODAY CAN BE stationed at any one of more than 120 embassies and consulates in places such as Bosnia, Herzegovina, Germany, Vietnam, the Caribbean, Canada and Africa. Getting to that first post can be a little rough. The eight week-long Marine Security Guard School at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., can be tough, but definitely worth the effort according to **Sgt. Ernestico Rancel Jr.**, a Marine security guard at Colombo, Sri Lanka. The 22-year-old native of Key West, Fla., talks about his job and why he thinks it is an adventure.

Typical Day: MSG duty is more than just standing guard at a post somewhere. In addition to their guard duties, there are the collateral duties that have to be done. Rancel, who was an aviation ordnance technician MOS 6531 before embassy duty, has the collateral duties of training and ISMT noncommissioned officer and he is a brown belt instructor. "On the MSG there's not really a typical day. Things are constantly changing. One moment you can just standing post with nothing going on and all of a sudden you have somebody trying to scale a wall to gain access to your perimeter," said Rancel, who has been in the Corps for three years.

Training Required to be an MSG Marine: "The training we received (dealt) with any crisis (that could occur) in one of our embassies—anything from a bomb attack to evacuating personnel. We work a lot with electronic systems, which is basically the panels that show us what has been accessed and allows us to monitor what's going on in our compound. We also did room clearing drills. We emphasized a lot of rules and regulations. We also got to do live drills using 'semunition' rounds in the fake town, Hogan's Alley, where the FBI trains.

Most Unusual Day on MSG Duty: "Well that has to be about two weeks after I got to post. There was a huge protest, about 7,000 people. Our Regional Security officer decided to react us to take up internal defense positions at the embassy. Myself and two other Marines were at the Marine house when we got the call to react. We grabbed our bulletproof vests and P.R. 24's and ran out the hatch. We jumped in our LAV and headed towards the embassy. Everything was blocked off so we made up our own route. Here we are in the middle of thousands of people protesting trying to get to the embassy. It was awesome!!!"

Job Rating: On a 1-10 scale, a 9. "You are given a tremendous amount of responsibility. You grow



▲ Since 1949, U.S. Marines have been guarding selected Department of State Foreign Service posts throughout the world—protecting American citizens and government property and preventing the compromise of classified material.

Photo courtesy of Sgt. Ernestico Rancel Jr.

as a leader not only the military. You become part of a tight knit group that has your back in case any situation arises. You get a lot of perks you don't see in the (Fleet Marine Force): a great house, a maid and a cook who take care of your laundry and food. You have a movie library of over 800 movies. You get to travel to other countries for different security details. Your able to save money and knock out a lot of college."

Biggest Myth: "The biggest myth has to be if you have tattoo's below your shoulders your automatically disqualified."

Life in Sri Lanka: "The coolest thing about where I'm assigned has to be the island and the people. You can do anything you want here from mountain climbing to wildlife safaris. Sri Lanka has so much history and it's great to just drive around the island and see how it has progressed over time. It has one of the world's greatest surfing spots, Arugam Bay, which is truly amazing."

Saved Rounds: "It's an adventure but you have to be ready for it—mentally and physically." **M**